

## BREAKFAST AND LUNCH INFORMATION

The Luverne School District offers healthy meals each day. Starting school year 2023-24, we are joining Minnesota's Free School Meals Program. **All students can get one breakfast and one lunch free of charge each day at school.**

Although no application is required to receive this free meal benefit, filling out the Application for Educational Benefits is still important! Your child(ren) may qualify for other benefits like reduced fees here at school. Your application may also help the school qualify for education funds, discounts, and other meal programs.

Students in Middle School and High School can purchase additional ala carte items. These purchases will be charged to your family food service account. If you DO NOT want your child to have the ability to make these charges to the family account, please contact the District Office. **Families who have a negative account balance will not be able to charge a la carte items.** This Food Service Account is a **PAY IN ADVANCE PROGRAM**. Families are encouraged to deposit money into their account PRIOR to the first day of school. You will be notified when there is a negative balance of \$5.00 during the school year by e-mail (if available), phone/School Messenger, or by mail in accordance with Policy 534.

**ONLINE payments** may be made to your family food service account. Choose the link located on the school district's web page: [www.isd2184.net](http://www.isd2184.net). Students who take a carton of milk to drink with a *sack lunch will be charged* \$0.40 per carton. Students who choose to purchase extra cartons of milk or juice at breakfast or lunch will be charged \$0.40 per carton through the family account.

You will have ONE family food service account regardless of the number of students in your family. Students may turn money in to either the Elementary School office or the Middle/High School office. You may view your family's account balance and charges through the Infinite Campus Parent Access link located on the School District's web page.

All insufficient fund checks and unpaid balances will be forwarded to a collection agency and will be charged a \$30.00 processing fee.

**Application for Educational Benefits** forms and information are included in this mailing. You MUST re-apply each year. Please return the application form BEFORE school begins.

Lunches will be served on the first day of school. Breakfast will start with the second day of school.

### Offer Vs. Serve School Meal Provision

As a parent or guardian of children in grades K-12, your child(ren) may or may not partake in our school meal program. If and when they do, I would like to remind you of the "offer vs. serve" provision in which your child(ren) is eligible to participate.

The "offer vs. serve" provision is the regulation that allows students to choose fewer than all of the five food component groups served on the lunch line. The regulation requires that students be offered all five food items of the lunch. Students must choose at least three of these items for their lunch. Declining one or two items does not relieve students from paying the full price for the school lunch, or further reduce the charge paid by students determined eligible for reduced-price lunches.

If you have any questions concerning this provision, please feel free to contact the District Office.

# UNPAID MEAL POLICY – DISTRICT POLICY CODE NO. 534

## I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that students receive healthy and nutritious meals through the school district's nutrition program and that school district employees, families, and students have a shared understanding of expectations regarding meal charges. The policy seeks to allow students to receive the nutrition they need to stay focused during the school day and minimize identification of students with insufficient funds to pay for school meals as well as to maintain the financial integrity of the school nutrition program.

## II. PAYMENT OF MEALS

- A. Students have use of a meal account. When the balance reaches zero, a student may charge no more than \$25.00 to this account. When an account reaches this limit, a student shall not be allowed to charge further meals or ala carte items until the negative account balance is paid. Families may add money to students' accounts through electronic payment options or pay at the school office.
- B. If the school district receives school lunch aid under Minn. Stat. 124D.111, it must make lunch available without charge to all participating students who qualify for free or reduced-price meals regardless of account balance.
- C. A student with an outstanding meal charge debt will be allowed to purchase a meal if the student pays for the meal when it is received.
- D. The school district may provide an alternate meal that meets federal and state requirements to a student who does not have sufficient funds in the student's account or cannot pay cash for a meal. The school district will accommodate special dietary needs with respect to alternate meals. The cost of the alternative meal will be charged to the student's account or otherwise charged to the student.
- E. When a student has a negative account balance, the student will not be allowed to charge a snack item.
- F. If a parent or guardian chooses to send in one payment that is to be divided between sibling accounts, the parent or guardian must specify how the funds are to be distributed to the students' accounts. Funds may not be transferred between sibling accounts unless written permission is received from the parent or guardian.

## III. LOW OR NEGATIVE ACCOUNT BALANCES – NOTIFICATION

- A. The school district will make reasonable efforts to notify families when meal account balances are low or fall below zero.
- B. Families will be notified of an outstanding negative balance once the negative balance reaches -\$5.00. Families will be notified by automated calling system, email, or letters sent home.
- C. Reminders for payment of outstanding student meal balances will not demean or stigmatize any student participating in the school lunch program.

## IV. UNPAID MEAL CHARGES

- A. The school district will make reasonable efforts to communicate with families to resolve the matter of unpaid charges. Where appropriate, families may be encouraged to apply for free and reduced-price meals for their children.
- B. The school district will make reasonable efforts to collect unpaid meal charges classified as delinquent debt. Unpaid meal charges are designated as delinquent debt when payment is overdue, the debt is considered collectable, and efforts are being made to collect it.
- C. Negative balances of more than -\$25.00, not paid prior to the end of the school year, will be turned over to the superintendent or superintendent's designee for collection. Collection options may include, but are not limited to, use of collection agencies, claims in the conciliation court, or any other legal method permitted by law.
- D. The school district may not enlist the assistance of non-school district employees, such as volunteers, to engage in debt collection efforts.

## V. COMMUNICATION OF POLICY

- A. This policy and pertinent supporting information shall be provided in writing (i.e. back –to-school packet) to:
  - 1. all households at or before the start of each school year;
  - 2. students and families who transfer into the school district, at the time of enrollment; and
  - 3. all school district personnel who are responsible for enforcing this policy.
- B. The school district may post the policy on the school district's website, in addition to providing the required written notification described above.